

WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS REVIEW

Date of Submission: *December 30, 2003*

Date(s) of Field Office Review: *December, 2006- February, 2007*

Submitter: *SUWA*

Name of Area to be Reviewed: *Behind the Rocks*

BLM Field Office(s) Affected: *Moab*

EVALUATION

1.) Was new information submitted by a member of the public for this area?

YES X . NO .

2.) If new information was submitted, describe the submission. For example, did the submission include a map that identifies the specific boundaries of the area(s) in question; a narrative that describes the wilderness characteristics of the area and documents how that information differs from the information gathered and reviewed in prior BLM inventories; photographic documentation; etc?

The area reviewed was derived from a GIS Data Layer provided by the proponent. New information such as maps, photographs, or narratives were not included.

3. As a result of interdisciplinary review of relevant information (which may include aerial photographs, state and county road information, road maintenance agreements, documentation from prior BLM inventories, field observations, maps, master title plats, evidence presented as new information by a proponent, etc.), do you conclude:

 a) the decision reached in previous BLM inventories that the area lacks wilderness characteristics is still valid.

(or)

 X b) some or all of the area has wilderness characteristics as shown on the attached map.

4. Describe your findings regarding specific wilderness characteristics and provide detailed rationale.

See attached narrative

5. Document all information considered during the interdisciplinary team review (e.g. aerial photographs, state and county road information, road maintenance agreements, documentation from prior BLM inventories, field observations, maps, master title plats, evidence presented as new information by a proponent, etc.)

During the course of the interdisciplinary team review, Moab BLM undertook the following steps:

In late 2006 and early 2007, BLM used GIS information to identify potential impacts on naturalness including county road data (previously verified as part of travel plan formulation), county-provided intrusion data, and local GIS data on range improvements, oil and gas wells, vegetative manipulations (especially chainings), and community pits. Master Title Plat data available from the State Office GIS was examined for rights-of-way.

BLM Moab next undertook a detailed review of high resolution aerial photos from 2006 to both verify information from the GIS review, as well as to look for additional impacts not incorporated in GIS. These impacts could include such things as seismic exploration lines not included in the county road inventory and other disturbances from past minerals activities.

The above steps enabled Moab BLM to prepare a map showing what remaining areas were likely to possess naturalness. Moab BLM convened an interdisciplinary review team meeting on January 11, 2007, to review the findings from the above steps. Team members were asked to provide specialized information, which included knowledge gained in the field, which either supported or refuted these findings. Based on input from this review, Moab BLM incorporated any necessary changes into its analysis.

The following specific documents and files were utilized:

1. *Grand County road inventory (GIS)*
2. *Grand County intrusion data (GIS)*
3. *Behind the Rocks range allotment file*
4. *NAIP 2006 aerial photos (GIS)*
5. *Vegetative treatments (local GIS)*
6. *Range improvements (local GIS)*
7. *San Juan County road inventory*
8. *1999 Utah Wilderness Inventory file (Behind the Rocks)*
9. *2003 Wilderness Inventory revision document*
10. *San Juan County road inventory (GIS)*
11. *UWC GIS Wilderness Proposal Data Layer (2005)*

6. List the members of the interdisciplinary team and resource specialties represented.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Resource(s) Represented</i>
<i>Bill Stevens</i>	<i>Wilderness, GIS, Recreation</i>

<i>Ann Marie Aubry</i>	<i>Hydrology, Soils</i>
<i>Brent Northrup</i>	<i>Minerals, RMP Team Lead</i>
<i>Chad Niehaus</i>	<i>Recreation</i>
<i>Daryl Trotter</i>	<i>Bbotany, NEPA coordinator</i>
<i>Donna Turnipseed</i>	<i>Cultural, Paleontology</i>
<i>Katie Stevens</i>	<i>Recreation, Planning</i>
<i>Lynn Jackson</i>	<i>Geology, Minerals, Associate FO Manager</i>
<i>Pam Riddle</i>	<i>Wildlife</i>
<i>David Williams</i>	<i>Range</i>
<i>Maggie Wyatt</i>	<i>Field Office Manager</i>

Field Office Manager /s/ Maggie Wyatt

Date 4/6/07

This determination is part of an interim step in BLM's internal decision-making process and does not constitute a decision that can be appealed.

Analysis of Citizens' Proposals for Wilderness Characteristics

Behind the Rocks

The Citizens' Proposal for this area includes acreage in the WSA, the WIA, and previously unevaluated (new) acreage. Only the new acreage will be addressed here. To date, BLM has received no new information (other than a map) on these new areas.

To possess wilderness characteristics, lands must possess naturalness and either outstanding opportunities for solitude and/or primitive and unconfined recreation. According to the 1964 Wilderness Act, these outstanding opportunities generally require a land mass of 5000 acres or more. An exception to this are those lands which adjoin other lands already judged to possess wilderness characteristics, as the opportunities need be present *somewhere* in the larger unit. In the case of Behind the Rocks, no unit would be large enough to potentially qualify as a stand-alone unit; it could possess outstanding opportunities only by association with similar lands in the adjoining WSA or WIA with WC.

The new acreage can be divided into several non-contiguous units, based on geography. Unit 1 is located on the southeast corner, and adjoins the WIA. This unit appears natural in character. Unit 2 is located about 2 miles west of Unit 1. Portions of Unit 2 appear natural and adjoin the WSA; other portions of Unit 2 are cut off from the WSA by roads or other impacts. (There are several very small additional areas, which appear to be GIS mapping errors, and will not be addressed here).

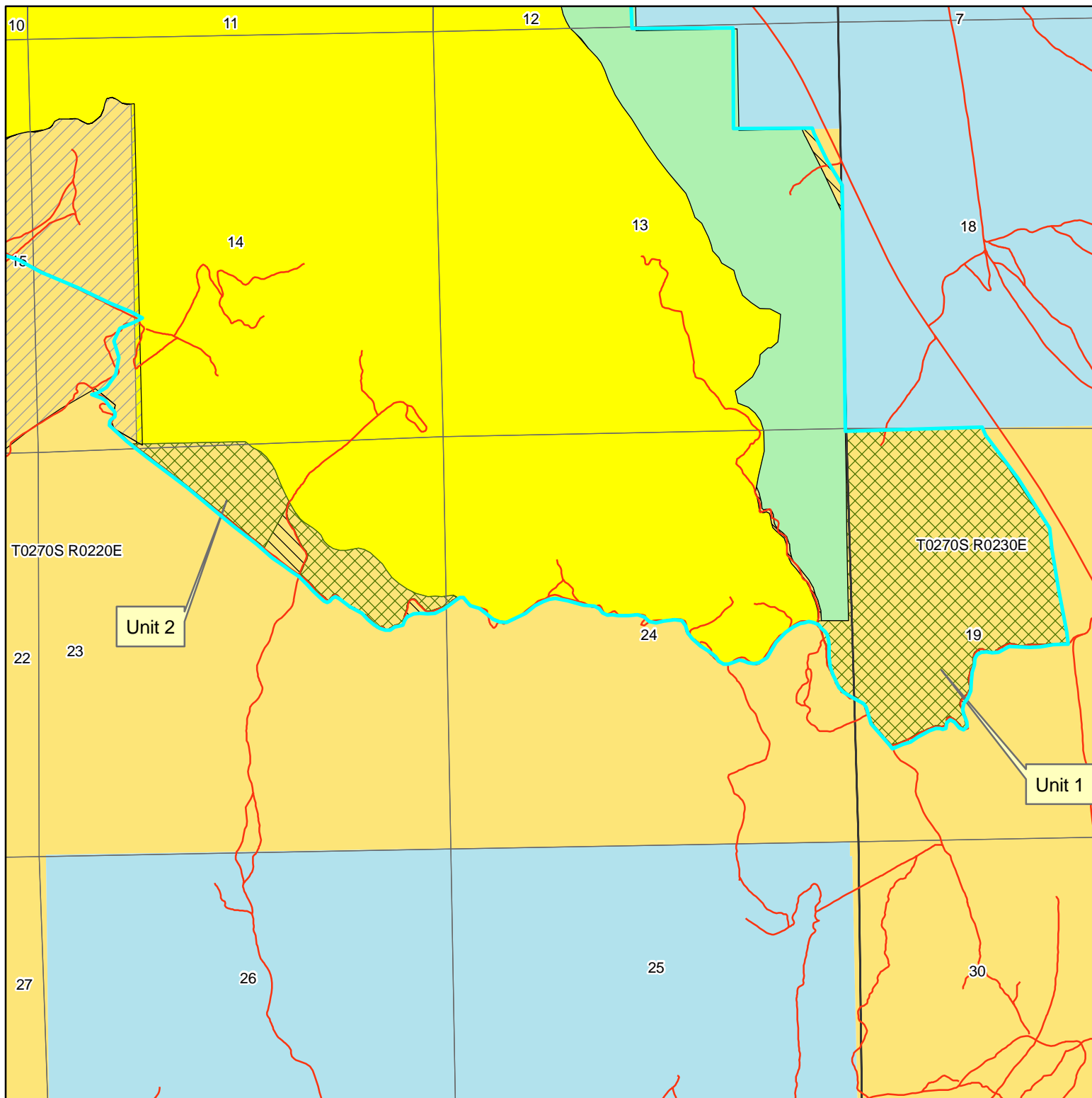
In summary, the following units have all or portions of their acreage likely to possess wilderness characteristics:

Unit 1: 206 acres

Unit 2: 56 acres

Total: 262 acres

Behind the Rocks WCR Review



Legend

Wilderness Characteristics Review

NWC

WC

Area under review

Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

US Forest Service (USFS)

National Park Service (NPS)

Indian Reservation (IR)

State

Private

San Juan Co Identified Routes

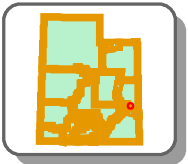
1999 Utah Wilderness Inventory

WC

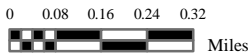
WC isolated by State

NWC

Wilderness Study Area



United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Moab Field Office
Map created on Feb 22, 2007



CAUTION:
Land ownership data is derived from less accurate data than the 1:24000 scale base map. Therefore, land ownership may not be shown for parcels smaller than 40 acres, and land ownership lines may have plotting errors due to source data.

No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management for the use of the data for purposes not intended by the BLM.